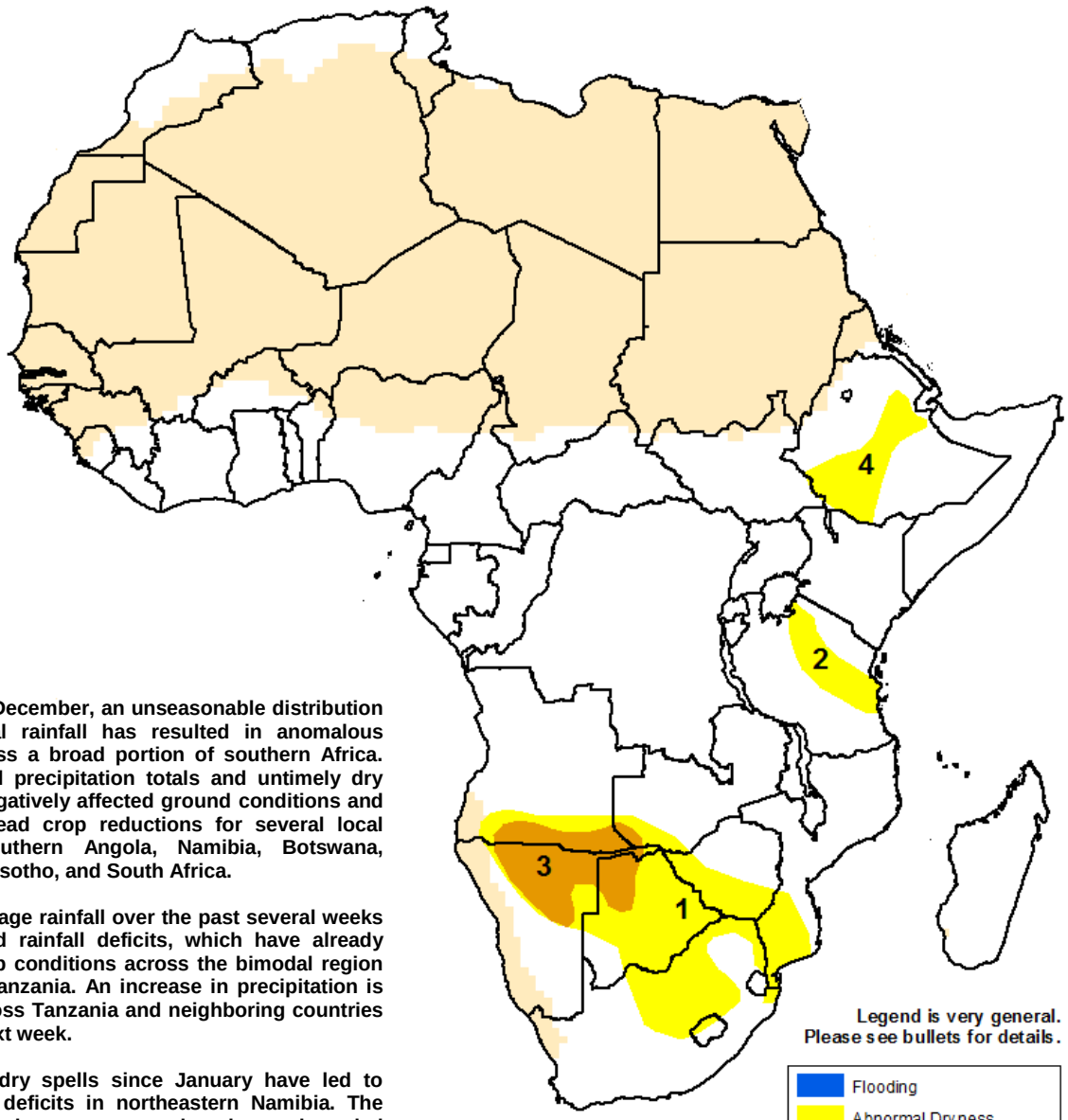
Climate Prediction Center's Africa Hazards Outlook
April 2 – April 8, 2015

- **Widespread, favorable rains observed over Southern Africa during the past week.**
- **Below-average rainfall persists in central Ethiopia.**



1) Since late December, an unseasonable distribution of monsoonal rainfall has resulted in anomalous dryness across a broad portion of southern Africa. Low seasonal precipitation totals and untimely dry spells has negatively affected ground conditions and is likely to lead crop reductions for several local areas in southern Angola, Namibia, Botswana, Zimbabwe, Lesotho, and South Africa.

2) Below-average rainfall over the past several weeks has increased rainfall deficits, which have already impacted crop conditions across the bimodal region of northern Tanzania. An increase in precipitation is expected across Tanzania and neighboring countries during the next week.

3) Extended dry spells since January have led to large rainfall deficits in northeastern Namibia. The continued below-average rain has degraded vegetation conditions further. With the rainy season approaching to an end, recovery is unlikely.

4) Despite an increase in rainfall during the last week, below-average moisture conditions remain across several local areas of southwestern and east-central Ethiopia. Moderate to heavy rains are forecast in southern and western Ethiopia, while suppressed rains are expected in the central portions of the country during the next week.

Good rains observed in Southern Africa during the past week.

During late March, a favorable distribution in rainfall was observed across Southern Africa. Widespread, light to moderate rains fell over South Africa, central Namibia, and Mozambique (**Figure 1**). Across the center parts of the sub-region, moderate to locally heavy rains were recorded over eastern Angola, Zambia, central Zimbabwe, and northern Botswana, which helped erode accumulated deficits and partially relieve dryness. In contrast, reduced rains were observed in western Namibia and eastern Madagascar. Compared to climatology, this past week's rainfall totals marked a second consecutive week with average to above-average rainfall across Southern Africa. Although the recent increase in rainfall has replenished ground moisture over some areas of Southern Africa, uneven distribution in rainfall since the beginning of the season has already negatively impacted crops over many local areas.

An analysis of rainfall anomalies has indicated that rainfall deficits have persisted across much of Southern Africa, in particular, eastern and southern Angola and northeastern Namibia since January. Negative anomalies have ranged between 100-300 mm across the western parts of the sub-region (**Figure 2**). Although the recent increase in rainfall may have helped to eliminate moisture deficits in some areas, prolonged dry spells and an erratic distribution of rainfall since the beginning of the season have already negatively impacted crops in many local areas.

During the next week, heavy downpours are forecast to continue over the western portions of Southern Africa, including eastern Angola, northeastern Namibia, and northwestern Botswana. This may trigger flash flooding over many local areas. In contrast, reduced to suppressed rains are forecast over South Africa and the eastern parts of the region, including eastern Zimbabwe, northern South Africa, and southern Mozambique.

Satellite Estimated Rainfall (mm)
Valid: March 25 – March 31, 2015

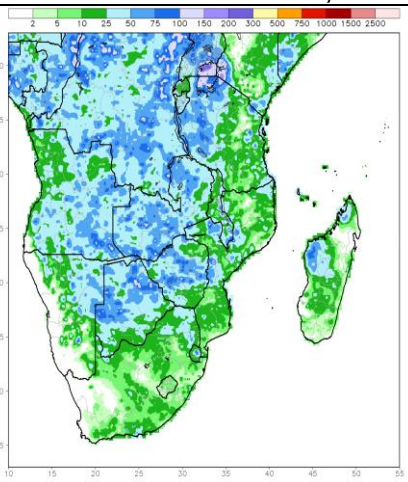


Figure 1: NOAA/CPC

Satellite-Estimated Rainfall Anomaly (mm)
Valid: January 01 – March 31, 2015

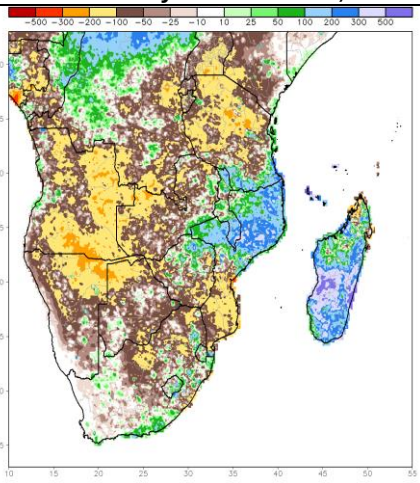


Figure 2: NOAA/CPC

Satellite-Estimated Rainfall Anomaly (mm)
Valid: February 01 – March 31, 2015

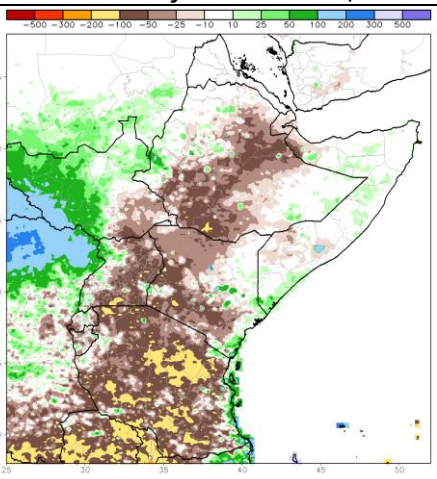


Figure 3: NOAA/CPC

Delayed onset of seasonal rains observed in central Ethiopia.

During the past week, widespread light to moderate rains were observed across Eastern Africa. While the heaviest rains fell around the Lake Victoria region, moderate to heavy rains were recorded in southwestern Ethiopia, coastal areas of eastern Kenya and southern Somalia. Meanwhile, light rains were observed elsewhere. Despite the recent increase in rainfall over the past few weeks, cumulative rainfall has remained below-average across northern Tanzania, eastern Uganda, southern Kenya, southwestern and east-central Ethiopia since February (**Figure 3**). More and sustained rainfall is needed to mitigate dryness, which has resulted from the delayed onset of rains. During the next week, a favorable distribution of rainfall is forecast over the Greater Horn of Africa, with enhanced rains around the Lake Victoria region, including northwestern Tanzania and southwestern Kenya. Moderate to locally heavy rains are also forecast in southern Ethiopia, and western Kenya. Meanwhile, light rains are expected elsewhere, except central Ethiopia, where a suppression of rain is forecast. This is likely to increase moisture deficits and potentially negatively affect cropping activities in the region.

Note: The hazards outlook map on page 1 is based on current weather/climate information and short and medium range weather forecasts (up to 1 week). It assesses their potential impact on crop and pasture conditions. Shaded polygons are added in areas where anomalous conditions have been observed. The boundaries of these polygons are only approximate at this continental scale. This product does not reflect long range seasonal climate forecasts or indicate current or projected food security conditions.

Questions or comments about this product may be directed to Wassila.Thiaw@noaa.gov or 1-301-683-3424.